



12

CHILDREN'S BOOK  
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Book











# LITTLE ALFRED.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "LITTLE ELLA."

Behold I have prepared the tenderest grass  
That grows on Zion's hill. Here feeble lambs  
May find sweet nourishment, and gather strength  
To climb the verdant heights, where the fair flock  
On richer pasture feed.—PEEP OF DAY.

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## PREFACE.

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I HAVE written this book for little boys. I hope they may like it; although it does not contain any wonderful stories about giants, or genii, or fairies.

I wanted to do them good, as well as to amuse them. Although I do not mention the name of the Saviour in every chapter, I yet try to talk of things that will lead

their minds up to him. I wish them to feel how good he has been to them, in giving them kind parents to teach them his word, health to enjoy the beauties of creation, and in bestowing on them so many other mercies.

That they may love the Redeemer in their early years, and at last dwell with him in heaven, is the prayer of their friend,

THE AUTHOR.

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# LITTLE ALFRED.

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## CHAPTER I.

### SUMMER PLEASURES.

Up ! let us to the fields away,  
And breathe the fresh and balmy air :  
The bird is building in the tree,  
The flower has open'd to the bee,  
And health, and love, and peace are there.  
MARY HOWITT.

ALFRED PENROSE was a little boy who lived in a pretty town on the banks of the Connecticut River. We will call the place in which Alfred lived Norwood, although that is not its real name. When the weather was warm Alfred's father would often take him and his older brothers in a

little boat upon the river. Sometimes they would row to a pleasant creek, over which large trees drooped their branches until they touched the water. There Alfred's father and brothers would catch fish, which they carried home to have cooked for breakfast the next morning. They were not cruel enough to use worms for bait. They baited their hook with pieces of raw meat, or dough, which the fish liked quite as well as worms.

While Alfred's brothers helped their father to fish, the little boy would steal away from them to a small brook which ran through the meadow where his father allowed him to go by himself, be-

cause there was no danger. Mr. Penrose did not like to have Alfred too near him when he was fishing. The little fellow's merry laugh and loud voice frightened away the fish. So, as we have said, Alfred would steal away to the little brook, and launch the shingle boat, with its paper sails, which his brother Harry had made for him; or pick his way across the brook on the stepping stones to the sunny bank, in search of the beautiful flowers which peep forth from among the withered leaves of the last year. And handfuls of the pretty light blue flower called innocence would he gather, for it is found everywhere in its season, smi-

ling in wood and meadow, by shaded streams, and in the glittering sunshine.

O, very pleasant was the budding spring-time, and the rich, ripe summer season, to little Alfred!

Then they would often bring their dinner with them, and eat it by the pebbly brook, which sung its sweet tune to them as it danced along, and mingled its voice with the merry birds which saluted them from the trees above their heads.

Alfred's father always received his son's little love-offering of flowers with a smile.

"I am glad my little boy loves flowers," he would say. "They

are God's beautiful presents to us. How sweetly Jesus speaks of flowers in Matthew vi, 28-30 :

“Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

“Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”



## CHAPTER II.

A CONTRAST TO THE FORMER  
CHAPTER.

\* \* \* \* \* little children, endeavoring to gather amusement from the very dust, and straws and pebbles of squalid alleys, shut out from the glorious countenance of nature.

WILLIAM HOWITT.

WHEN little Alfred returned home, on a Saturday afternoon, from one of the delightful visits to the woods of which I have told you, his mamma lifted him up on the sofa beside her, and said,

“How good our heavenly Father is to my little Alfred! He has given him a kind papa, who loves him dearly. Little boys

cannot be thankful enough to God for that great blessing. There are many little children who have very unkind fathers. Some of them are wicked enough to spend all their money for rum, and do not get anything for their poor little children to eat."

Alfred's little sister Flora had run up to her mamma, to listen to her as she talked with Alfred. She was a tender-hearted little girl, and her lip quivered, and the tears came into her eyes, when she heard about the children who had such naughty fathers.

Then Mrs. Penrose took little Flora upon her lap, and went on talking to Alfred. She said,

"And my little Alfred's papa

takes him in the pleasant woods, and in the fields, and lets him gather the sweet flowers which grow there. And he and little Flora can hear the happy birds sing all day long. Now, there are some little children who never see a flower grow, or hear a bird sing, and they scarcely even see the pretty blue sky which is over their heads."

"O, mamma!" said Alfred, "are they blind and deaf?"

"No, my love, but they live in dark and crowded places in the city. Some live in garrets, and some in cellars, where the houses are high and the streets very narrow. So the beautiful things which God has given us to make

us glad are quite shut out from them. When I lived in the city I went one day to see a poor family who lived in a cellar, in a dark and dirty court. The father of this family was a drunkard. He had even sold, for rum, the bed on which his sick wife lay. When I went to her, the poor woman had only some straw, in a corner of the cellar, to lie upon. The children had very little fire, although the weather was cold, and nothing to eat, except what people carried them from day to day.

“ Among the children was one pale, sickly-looking little boy, named Johnny. He was only eight years old; but his mother

told me that she did not know what she should have done without little Johnny. He did everything that he could for her during the day; and when she coughed or moved at night, the little boy would run up to her and ask her if she would have some water, or if he should raise her head higher.

“In a corner, Johnny had a faded rose planted in some dirt which he had scooped from the cellar, and put in an old tin cup.

“The rose had been, one day, dropped by a lady, who was walking before Johnny, in Broadway. Johnny was an honest boy. He ran up to the lady, and offered her the rose which she had

dropped. The lady smiled, and said, 'You can keep it, my little boy. I do not want it.'

"The rose was then fresh and beautiful. Johnny thought that if he planted it, it might perhaps live. It did take root even in that poor soil, but it could not grow any.

"He looked up into my face, on the day that I first went to see his mother, and said,

"'O, ma'am! do you think that my rose will live? I have kept it in the warmest place, and watered it every day.'

"'Yes,' said his mother, 'however hungry and cold poor Johnny has been, he never forgot his rose.'

“ I saw when he asked me the question that his rose was nearly dead. The tears came into his eyes when I told him this.

“ Poor little boy ! The flower was like himself, withering away for want of light and air.

“ Just think, Alfred, how happy little Johnny would have been, running with his bare feet through the fields, looking at the golden and speckled butterflies, filling his cap with wild-flowers, and listening to the song of the birds, and the busy hum of the honey-bee !

“ One day I took Johnny to my house, and showed him a stand of flowers. He was delighted, He clapped his hands,

and his eyes sparkled. He smelt the heliotropes and the roses, and he looked at the rich flowers of the cactus. When I gave him a bouquet to carry to his own miserable home, he seemed perfectly happy.

“The next time I went to that dark, gloomy cellar, there the flowers stood in the old tin cup from which the poor rose had been taken.”

Alfred and Flora felt sorry for poor Johnny; but they were glad to hear that his mother got well, and that little Johnny had been put with a farmer, where he could hear the birds sing, and see the brooks and the trees, and pick wild-flowers in the fields.

When they went to bed they thanked God for many mercies which they had not thought of before.



## CHAPTER III.

## THE SNOW.

How beautiful the earth is now !  
The hills have put their vesture on,  
And clothed is the forest bough :  
Say not 'tis an unlovely time !

MARY HOWITT.

IF the summer season and the spring-time were pleasant to little Alfred, so also were the winter hours.

When the snow came—the fair, beautiful snow, falling so softly and quietly upon the frozen ground, and making every tree look like a fairy bower—Alfred ran about the house, singing :

“ I love the snow, the first white snow,  
That decks the merry earth.”

When Alfred was very little he had no sled of his own; but his friends, Charles and Arthur Brown, used now and then to give him a ride upon their sled. This he always enjoyed very much.

When he was four years old, Alfred said,

“O, father, I do wish that I had a sled of my own!”

“Why do you wish to have a sled of your own, my son?” said his father. “The boys are so kind as to give you a ride every day.”

“Yes, I know it, papa,” said Alfred; “but I am afraid they take me sometimes when they want to ride themselves. And

then you know I can only go to ride when their school is out."

"Indeed," said Alfred's mother, "I have thought lately that I would like Alfred to have a sled of his own. He gets his lessons quickly now, so that he is quite through them by eleven o'clock. If he had a little sled he could slide down the terrace two hours before dinner time. It would be good exercise for him."

Alfred's father looked pleased to hear that he got his lessons quickly. He said, "I think if Alfred continues to study well he must have a sled of his own."

"O, father! do please get me one, and have it painted green, with a black stripe around it."

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE SLED AND THE SKATES.

When the north winds blow, on my sled I go,  
With a bounding heart, o'er the glitt'ring snow ;  
Or swift on the clear, cold ice I glide,  
With my watchful father close by my side.

O, how very much pleased was Alfred to find the sled he had asked for standing by his bed one morning when he awoke ! As soon as he had washed and dressed himself, and said his prayers, he ran to thank his dear father for his nice present. Alfred's mamma had bought him a woolen cap, which she wadded and lined, and he had a warm plaid cloak ; so he was quite ready for his first ride.

The snow was frozen very hard, so that the upper crust bore the sled; and merrily, merrily indeed did the little boy slide swiftly down the terrace, and even to the very bottom of the lawn. He did not mind pulling the sled up the hill for the pleasure of riding down.

By and by he looked up at the bed-room window, and saw his little sister Flora's face looking at him through one of the panes. Alfred was not a selfish boy. He liked to share every pleasure with his sister.

"O, my poor little Flora!" said he, "you must come out and have a ride too."

So he left his sled, and ran

into the house to ask his mother if she would not let Flora ride upon the sled. At first his mamma said she was afraid it was too cold for Flora; but when Alfred promised to take great care of her, she said that she might go out with him for a little while. She put on Flora's warm cap, and coat, and mittens, and comforter, and stood by the window to watch the little ones.

O, how they both enjoyed it! Alfred was very much pleased to have Flora put under his care. He kept her feet covered up, and drew the sled down the terrace very carefully. After a little while Mrs. Penrose sent Ann out to bring Flora into the house.

When Mr. Penrose came home to dinner, he asked Alfred how he had enjoyed the morning.

“O, father,” said Alfred, “I have been so happy! How much I thank you for my new sled! I will be a very good boy for it.”

“I hope you will be a good boy, Alfred,” said his papa. “You must ask God to keep you from doing wrong; for you know, I suppose, that it is only through his help that we can do a right action. I am always afraid when I hear people boast of what they intend to do.”

Soon after this, Alfred's father bought him a beautiful little pair of skates, and took him upon the pond to teach him to skate.

He had thought that winter was almost as pleasant as summer when he first rode upon his sled ; but now that he could skate too, he forgot all the pleasures of the summer, and, like Tommy in the looking-glass, wished that it could be “always winter.”



## CHAPTER V.

## SCRIPTURE INSTRUCTION.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.—Deut. vi, 6-9.

BEFORE little Alfred could read he knew a great deal of the Bible. He had a volume of Scripture plates, which he would turn over upon his father's knee, and ask him the meaning of them. Alfred's father loved the Bible, and he wanted his children

to love it too ; and therefore he took great delight in explaining it to them, and in telling them the beautiful stories which it contains.

There was the picture of Jacob dreaming his sweet dream about the ladder which reached to heaven, on which the angels of God came and went.

And there was brave Daniel in the lions' den ; because he *would* worship God when the king said he should not.

And there, too, was faithful Abraham, about to offer up to God "his son, his only son Isaac," whom he loved.

All these, and many more delightful stories from the Bible, Al-

fred and Flora would repeat before they could read.

They both thought and talked a great deal about the Bible.

One day, in the summer time, Alfred and Flora went out together into the garden. They sat down upon a seat under the willow-tree. Little Flora took her doll in her arms when she went out; but when they returned to the house she did not have it with her.

Alfred said,

“Flora, where is your doll?”

“O, brother,” said Flora, “I left her lying on the grass.”

“Why did you leave her there?” inquired Alfred.

“I thought, brother, that may-

be God would make a gourd grow over her head, like that which grew over Jonah."

"But the sun is not as hot here as it is in Jonah's country," said Alfred. "Besides, she is not flesh and blood."

Some time after this, when the weather had become cold, Alfred had a cousin, named Rupert, come to spend his vacation with him. Rupert was five years older than Alfred. He had not lived much at home with his parents. He had been almost always at a public school. Alfred had never yet been to school.

Rupert's mother sent Flora a large doll. She said,

“O, thank you, cousin! I will name her Miriam.”

“Who is Miriam?” said Rupert; for he had not heard of her.

“O, cousin,” said Flora, “Miriam was the dear little sister who watched Moses when he lay in the ark by the river’s side. And it was Miriam who played beautiful music on the timbrel, after the children of Israel had crossed the Red Sea.”

Rupert managed to amuse himself pretty well, for the first few days, with skating, and riding down hill on Alfred’s sled. But after a little time he took a cold, which confined him to the house, and he began to look

around for something to read. Now there were quantities of very instructive, and very amusing books too, about the house; but there were not fairy tales enough to satisfy Rupert. So, in place of reading, he began to tell Alfred a good many of the wonderful things that he had heard or had read in his own books.

He said that there was once a man who had a wonderful salve, which, when put on a person's eyes, would make him see all the silver, and gold, and diamonds, and other precious stones in the world.

"Is that true, Rupert?" asked Alfred.

“True? No, I do not suppose it is true.”

“Then I do not like it as well as that story papa told me the other day about the blind man, on whose eyes Jesus put the eye-salve; for that is true,” said Alfred.

“I will tell you another story, then,” said Rupert, laughing.

“A fairy once gave a cap to a man whose name was Fortunatus. Whenever Fortunatus wished to be anywhere, he had only to put the cap upon his head, and he was in the place where he wished to be, in less than a minute.”

“Is not that true either?” said Alfred.

“No; fairy tales are never true.”

“I do not think it is as pretty as the story of Elijah, which papa has often told me, nor any more wonderful either. Elijah was taken to heaven in a fiery chariot. There is a great deal about Elijah in the Bible.”

“Well,” said Rupert, “I think you pair my stories pretty well. See if you can match this.

“There was a poor woman who had a good little girl named May-Flower; and one day a fairy brought May-Flower a cow, and told her to milk it. She milked the cow, and it gave milk enough to fill all the dishes and pans in the house; and yet

the milk still ran, so that there was no end of it. And that one cow made that woman the richest person on the island where she lived."

Alfred's mamma had been listening to Rupert's stories. When he stopped, she smiled and said,

"I think Alfred can match that story."

"How, mamma? O, I know! Elijah went once to a poor woman, and asked her for a piece of bread, when there was a great famine in the land. The woman had only 'a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse;' but that handful of meal never grew any less, or the oil either,

until God sent rain to put an end to the famine."

"Yes, Alfred, that is a match to Rupert's story : but do not you recollect another miracle, which is quite as wonderful as the story of the cow which gave so much milk ?"

Alfred did not, at first, understand what his mamma wanted him to remember, until she said,

"What did the prophet Elisha do for the poor widow whose husband feared God, when they were going to make slaves of her two sons ?"

"O, he made one pot of oil fill all the vessels that were in the house ; and the woman sold the oil, and paid her debts with it,

and then had enough money left for herself and her sons to live upon.”\*

“ Well, those *are* nice stories,” said Rupert. “ I did not know before that there were any such in the Bible.”

Then Alfred said,

“ O, you haven’t heard half of them yet. Let me show you my picture of Samuel, and we will get mamma to tell us about him. I never get tired of hearing about little Samuel and his dear, good mother !”

Rupert looked as if he did not care about hearing the story ; but he seemed pleased with the picture. It was the picture of a

\* See frontispiece.

beautiful boy, kneeling before a very old man, with a long beard. The sun fell upon the boy's curls, and made them appear of a golden color.

“Is not little Samuel pretty?” said Alfred. “And that is grandpa Eli. Does not he look good? O, do mamma tell me about him!”

And mamma told him the story; and Rupert seemed to get interested in it before she had finished. I give it to my little readers in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER VI.

## LITTLE SAMUEL.

It is the child to Hannah sent,  
When humbly she implored ;  
It is the child by Hannah lent  
To her prayer-hearing Lord.

## BIBLE STORIES.

MRS. PENROSE said, " I like to read the stories in the Bible very slowly ; and I like to think, as I go along, how the persons of whom I read looked, and how their houses looked, and how they felt when they did certain things of which the Bible tells us. It makes me remember the stories better, and makes me feel as if I had seen all that I read of.

" The story of Samuel always

appeared to me like a beautiful picture. I seem to see the house in which pious Hannah lived.

“ There were many pretty hills in the land of Syria ; and perhaps her husband’s house stood on the side of one of them. Olive-trees, with their pale green leaves, and dark cedars, may have shaded the house, for they both grew in that country ; and grape-vines, bearing sunny grapes, may have grown over the pleasant porch.

“ But I must not indulge my fancy too much : so I will go on with my little story.

“ Hannah was a good woman. She had no children : so she prayed to God to give her a child. She said if God would

do so, her child should be his as long as he lived.

“God heard Hannah’s prayer. He sent her a little son, and then she was very happy.

“Some people make promises to God, and then forget them. This is wicked. Hannah did not do so. She remembered how she had promised God that her little boy should be his child. She called him Samuel; and she took great pains to make Samuel a good boy. She taught him about the true God, and about the Messiah who was to come to redeem his people. She sung him to sleep with holy songs. She taught him to kneel down and pray to the God of Israel

when he was a very little boy.

“ I have no doubt that she told him of all the great things that God had done for the children of Israel. How the waters of the Red Sea parted, and stood up, like high crystal walls, on each side of them, as they walked across on the dry land ; and how he sent them bread from heaven, when they traveled through the dreary wilderness, and made plenty of pure, cool water gush out from the burning rock, when they were almost choked with thirst.

“ Little Samuel loved God. Very young children *can* love God. They need not wait to do

that until they have grown large, or until they have learned a great deal.

“At last Samuel became old enough to live away from his mother; so she took him up to the tabernacle at Shiloh. The tabernacle was the church in which the Jews worshiped. In the tabernacle lived a very good old man. His name was Eli. It was Eli who was to take care of Samuel.

“I suppose Hannah led her little boy by the hand, except when the way was rough, or when he became tired of walking, and then perhaps she carried him. And maybe when it became hot Samuel might want to

take his little nap under some of the shady trees that grew on their way. As he slept, I think, his mother sat beside him, and almost cried to think that he was to be with her no longer; for although she was willing that he should go to be a priest of the Lord, yet it was hard for her to part with her only one. Perhaps, as she looked at Samuel sleeping under the shadowing tree, she softly said, ‘O, my darling boy, how I shall miss you when I return home! Your little feet will not run after me when I go out to pick fresh flowers. When I go to bring water from the spring you will not skip beside me, and no little dimpled hands will try

to raise the pitcher for me then. My house will be so lonely without my precious boy! I shall dream of you in the night, and think that you are near; but, when I try to touch you, no little hand will be there to take hold of mine; and when I wake in the morning I shall never hear my Samuel's sweet voice saying, 'Peace be with you, my mother.'

"But though Hannah may have thought thus while she looked at her sleeping boy, she never once felt that she wanted to take back her vow. She loved God so well that she was glad that she had anything as lovely as her Samuel to give him.

“ Thus I might weep, Alfred, if you were one day to go from us, as a missionary, to distant lands ; but I think that I should still be willing, and even thankful, that you were called by God to such a high and holy office.”



## CHAPTER VII.

THE FAREWELL—THE RETURN  
HOME.

And true it was that angels still  
Good little Samuel led ;  
Were with him in his happy play,  
And round his little bed.  
They kept his heart so kind and true,  
They made his eye so mild ;  
For dearly do the angels love  
A gentle little child.

## FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

“ PERHAPS Eli met Hannah at the door of the tabernacle, and she may have said to him,

“ ‘ Eli, I bring you a precious offering. It is my only child. It was sweet to have him with me, for he was gentle and obedient, and he made my house cheerful

and happy. But I promised my little Samuel to the Lord, and now I have come to perform my vow.'

"Then Eli would say,

"'Thou hast done well, my daughter. The Lord bless thee, and repay thee, because thou hast fulfilled the vows which thy lips did make unto him.'

"At last Hannah had to leave her little boy. It must have been hard for Samuel to have his mother go away from him. At night her voice would not sing him to sleep. When he wakened in the darkness, and said, 'My mother!' she would not be there to answer him. No more would he sit upon her lap, in the

evening hour, to hear beautiful stories of the patriarchs and saints, and of the great Messiah that was to come.

“But if he said, ‘Do not go, my mother!’ she told him that she would love him still, and come again to see him; and that Eli would be a dear father unto him.

“Perhaps when she went away she said,

“‘O, Eli, be very kind to my little boy! He is only a tender babe. His little bed has always been near my own. Shall he not sleep near you at night, so that if he is ill you may attend to him?’

“And the good old priest told



Hannah to be comforted; for he would love and take care of her boy, and teach him to be good.

“Then Hannah kissed and blessed Samuel, and returned to her own home.

“But, O, how much she thought of him on her way back to her house! She thought of

him when she saw flowers such as he had picked for her on his way to Shiloh, and which she had put in her bosom ; and when the tree came in sight under which he had slept, and when she saw, gushing from the hill, the spring of whose water she had given Samuel to drink, and with which she had wetted his soft, warm hair, and cooled his sweet, rosy face. But Hannah heard God's voice telling her not to grieve for Samuel ; for that he was to be a great and holy prophet, who should do much good in the world, and serve the Lord from youth to old age. Then Hannah listened to the voice of God, and was comforted."

## CHAPTER VIII.

GOD'S CALL TO THE LITTLE  
PROPHET.

When little Samuel woke,  
And heard his Maker's voice,  
At every word he spoke  
How much did he rejoice !  
O blessed, happy child, to find  
The God of heaven so near and kind !

SUNDAY-SCHOOL HYMNS.

“HANNAH used to go up to the tabernacle, once a year, to see her dear boy. She always took him a little coat. O, how much pleasure she must have taken in making that little coat ! It was of linen, and made very much like the tunic aprons which children wear now, only that it was long.

“ Samuel must have enjoyed his dear mother’s yearly visit very much. I think he often went to the door of the tabernacle, and looked out, on the day that he expected her. When he saw her coming, perhaps he asked Eli to let him run and meet her; unless he was too busy assisting at the altar, for it was the day of the yearly sacrifice.

“ Samuel lived happily in the tabernacle. God loved him, and those whom he loves are happy.

“ One night, as Samuel slept upon his little bed, a voice called ‘ Samuel!’

“ The little boy thought that Eli called him, and he ran to the prophet, saying,

“ ‘ Here am I.’ ”

“ Eli told Samuel that *he* had not called him ; and bade him go and lie down again. He had just done so, when again the voice called ‘ Samuel !’ ”

“ The little boy again jumped from his bed, and ran to Eli, saying,

“ ‘ Here am I ; for thou didst call me.’ ”

“ Eli said,

“ ‘ I called not, my son. Lie down again.’ ”

“ Then the third time did God call to Samuel, and three times did he go to Eli, thinking it was he who called him.

“ But then Eli knew that it was God who called the child. He

told Samuel to say, when the Lord called him again, ‘Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.’

“This little Samuel did. Then the Lord told him that he was going to punish Eli’s wicked sons. Eli had wicked children, although he was a good man. He did not punish his children when they were naughty; so they grew up sinners against God, and were destroyed for their wickedness.

“Samuel lived to be a very old man. When he died the whole nation mourned for him; for he was a great prophet in Israel. We do not read of his having ever done one wrong thing during his whole life.

“Now, my children,” added Mrs. Penrose, “perhaps you may think that Samuel was very highly favored to have God talk with him. But he speaks to you also. He speaks to you in the Bible, which tells you how you may get to heaven. He speaks to you by your minister and Sunday-school teacher, every week. He speaks to you through your parents’ voices; and he speaks to your heart, by his Holy Spirit, every day of your lives.”

Little Flora had been listening to the story as attentively as Rupert and Alfred, although her bright blue eyes began to look sleepy. She said,

“Mamma, is there more about Samuel in the Bible?”

“Yes, my dear, there is much more than I have told you,” said her mamma.

“Then I will make haste and learn to read,” said she, “that I may know all that Samuel did when he was a big man.”

Her mamma was glad that her little stories made Flora wish to read the Bible for herself.



## CHAPTER IX.

## RUPERT'S SUNDAY RIDE.

“This day belongs to God alone ;  
He chooses Sunday for his own ;  
And we must neither work nor play,  
Because it is the sabbath-day.”

EVERY morning, at the breakfast table, each one repeated a text of Scripture. They selected their texts alphabetically, each text beginning with the same letter. They began with A, and went on daily with each letter until they got through the alphabet. Rupert did not like this. He could not see the use of it, he said. But the truth was, he did not want the trouble of learning the text.

Mr. Penrose knew that Rupert was to be with them but a short time, and he was anxious to teach him something good while he had the opportunity. He felt sorry for the poor boy, who had learned so little of God's word, and who had never been taught to make any difference between the sabbath and other days. Rupert often gave Mr. and Mrs. Penrose trouble; but they bore it patiently, in hope of doing him some good.

One Sunday the snow lay deep upon the ground, but there was a good path down the hill. Alfred set off for church with his papa, brothers, and Rupert. It was too cold for little Flora to

go that day. When they got about half way to church Rupert found that he had left his pocket-handkerchief. Like most careless boys, Rupert was always losing his pocket-handkerchief. Instead of putting it back in his pocket, after using it, he would lay it by him in the chair on which he sat, and leave it there when he got up. Rupert's pocket-handkerchief was always to be picked up.

“So, as I have said, when he was half way to church Rupert had to go back for his pocket-handkerchief. The family walked slowly toward the church, thinking that he would overtake them: but he did not; and Mr.

Penrose waited for him upon the step. As he stood there, however, he saw Rupert riding in a sleigh, through a street which crossed the one on which the church stood, with John Strong, a boy with whom he had formed a great intimacy, very much against the wishes of his uncle and aunt.

The sermon had commenced when Master Rupert walked into church, and took his seat in his uncle's pew, with rather a sheepish air. As usual, after he got there he gaped about the church, put his head down as if composing himself to sleep; then jerked it up suddenly, turned round, fidgeted on his seat, and

made everybody near him uncomfortable.

When the hymn was sung he turned his back to the minister, and looked up at the choir; a practice, by the by, which shows as much irreverence as bad breeding. When we sing we should feel as much devotion as when we pray. How can we do this when we stand gazing at the choir, instead of feeling the solemn words that we are repeating?

As soon as the benediction was over, Rupert caught his cap, and, leaning over to Alfred, said,

“By jingo! what a noble pair of horses John Strong drives!

I have had such a capital ride !”

Alfred's father took hold of his hand, and did not let it go until he got to the house ; and Henry Penrose walked beside Rupert ; so that he had no one to listen to his praises of John Strong's driving, and John Strong's horses, of which his mind was full.

Between the Sunday school, church in the afternoon, and reading aloud to Alfred and Flora, from some interesting and profitable book, Rupert had no time for any conversation with Alfred ; and nothing had been said to him about his conduct in the morning. He seemed, however, even more restless and tired

of Sunday than usual. Mrs. Penrose searched the house for some book to interest him, but could find none that he would read.



## CHAPTER X.

SUNDAY EVENING—TALK WITH  
RUPERT.

Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.—Deut. xiii, 4.

AFTER tea the family assembled around a bright coal fire, which burnt in the grate, and threw its pleasant glow over every object in the room. The wind howled around the house, and more snow was falling to improve the already fine sleighing. The solar lamp lighted the table around which the family sat. All looked quiet and happy but our poor little restless Ru-

pert. In the next room slept Flora, it may be dreaming of the loving Marys who went to the sepulchre of Jesus; for that was the story which her mother told her that night, before she laid her in her little bed.

“Papa,” said Alfred, “I know all the commandments now; may I say them to you?”

And Alfred repeated them to his father, without missing many words.

“What’s the use of getting all those commandments?” asked Rupert.

“Papa says it is God’s law, which we are to try to keep,” said Alfred.

“Why, you *do* keep it, don’t

you?" said Rupert. "I am sure I do."

"Are you quite sure, Rupert?" said Mr. Penrose, looking off his book.

"Yes, sir; I am sure I do not worship images, nor lie, nor swear, nor steal."

"And you think, then, that you have not broken one of God's commandments to-day?"

"I do not think I have."

"O, Rupert, take care!" said Alfred. "I have often said so; but when papa came to talk to me about them, I found that I broke them every day."

"Let us begin then, Rupert," said Alfred's father, "and inquire what the first commandment is."

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE COMMANDMENTS.

Say not, Too soon  
I urge their tottering steps. Should I forbear,  
On every side deceitful strangers stand,  
And beckon them away ; in flowery paths  
Awhile to sport ; and then to wander long  
Amidst the hills of darkness and of death,  
Where hungry beasts, in every thicket hid,  
Wait to devour.—PEEP OF DAY.

RUPERT knew the words of the first commandment. He answered, “The first commandment is, ‘Thou shalt have no other gods before me.’”

“Now,” said Mr. Penrose, “this commandment forbids our giving that worship, or love, to any other which is due to God alone. If we think of anything

besides God when we profess to be thinking of him, and when we seem to be engaged in his worship, then we are putting other gods before him. Now tell me, Rupert, were you thinking much of God when you were in church this morning?"

"No, not very much," said Rupert, who, with all his faults, generally spoke the truth.

Then Mr. Penrose tried to show Rupert that he had broken the first commandment, by allowing something besides God to have the first place in his mind and heart; but he did not dwell as long upon the subject as he wished to do, because he knew that young people, from their

natural dislike to serious truths, can best be instructed by a few hints at a time.

“ You say that you did not think much of God, Rupert. Will you tell me candidly what you *did* think of ? ”

After close questioning, Rupert acknowledged that he had been thinking more of John Strong's beautiful gray horses than of anything else ; and that he wished that he had them.

*Mr. Penrose.* “ What is the second commandment, Rupert ? ”

Rupert undertook to say it ; but could not get quite through it, and Alfred helped him.

*Mr. Penrose.* “ It is certain that we always worship what we love

best ; and I fear, Rupert, although you had no graven image to worship, your heart was going out in idolatry after those ‘beautiful gray horses,’ as much as the poor Papist’s after his wooden cross, or his image of the Virgin. Do you not think so ? Alfred, can you tell me of another way in which the second commandment can be broken ?”

“By thinking of our clothes instead of listening to the minister, and trying to pray to God, when we are in church,” said Alfred, blushing very deeply.

“Well, that is what I did not do, I am sure,” said Rupert, whose fault was certainly not that of being too particular about

his dress; for his clothes were always pitched on any way, although he was old enough to dress himself properly if he would.

*Mr. Penrose.* "But it is what I knew a little boy do, when he had his new suit of plaid clothes, with brass buttons, on for the first time, and two pockets in them besides. First he looked at himself in the buttons; then he put his hymn-book in his pocket; then he pulled it out."

*Alfred.* "O, father! I know I did that; but I was sorry for it, and I have tried not to break the second commandment since."

*Mrs. Penrose.* "Yes, father, I think that we must not talk of what is past any more."

*Mr. Penrose.* “ I spoke of it to show Rupert in how many different ways we can break God’s commandments ; and to let him know that I did not consider him the only guilty one. Now, I am afraid you have broken two of the commandments, Rupert. Shall we go on with the others ? ”

*Rupert.* “ Yes ; for I am sure I could not have broken any more by that little sleigh-ride. ”

*Mr. Penrose.* “ What is the third commandment, Rupert ? ”

*Rupert.* “ Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain : for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. ”

*Mr. Penrose.* “ Your first words

after the congregation was dismissed prove that you broke the third commandment. Christ says, 'Swear not at all: neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King: neither shalt thou swear by thy head; because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.' Matt. v, 34-37.

"Now, your communication was not Yea, yea, or Nay, nay, when you burst upon us with 'By jingo,' before the minister had hardly finished the benedic-

tion. That word was wicked, and certainly comes under the head of that 'foolish talking' which the apostle condemns."

*Rupert.* "Well, I know you will make me out a sabbath-breaker next. I knew I was that myself; but I did not know that I was doing so many other bad things by that sleigh-ride."

*Mr. Penrose.* "Since you plead guilty to breaking the fourth commandment, Rupert, we will pass over that, and come to the fifth."

"I did not break that. My father and mother would not have cared for my riding to-day," said Rupert, who had got the Bible opened before him, at the

twentieth chapter of Exodus, that he might find out what the commandments were.

*Mr. Penrose.* "But you are now under our care, Rupert. We are as parents to you while you stay with us. You knew that we would not like to have you riding about the town on a Sunday; therefore, in not honoring us, and doing as we wish, I think you broke the fifth commandment."

By this time Rupert seemed to have got quite interested in the examination of himself; for Mr. Penrose spoke kindly to him, and he knew that it was out of love to him that he thus talked to him of his faults.

He ran over the commandments :

“ ‘Thou shalt not kill.’ I am sure I did not do that.”

*Mr. Penrose.* “Not if you did not get angry at the horses, or overdrive them.”

*Rupert.* “We could not get angry at them; they are such noble fellows, and went so free: but they *were* all in a lather when they got to the stable. I cannot say they are not hurt, but that was not my fault, you know.”

*Mr. Penrose.* “If they were hurt, I am afraid you will have to bear a little of the blame; as you were probably the cause of the extra ride.”

*Rupert.* (Looking at the Bible,) “‘Thou shalt not commit adultery.’ That has nothing to do with horses. ‘Thou shalt not steal.’ We did not steal, at any rate! ‘Thou’”——

*Mr. Penrose.* “Stop, stop! Rupert. Not so fast. Do not skip over the eighth commandment so swiftly. Did Mr. Strong know that John had his horses and sleigh?”

*Rupert.* “No, sir, I do not think he did. I suppose he expected John would take them directly to the stable, when he left the family at church.”

*Mr. Penrose.* “Then you were both using what belonged to another, in a way that the owner

would not have liked; and in doing this you broke the eighth commandment."

*Rupert.* "O dear, uncle! I hope that you won't make out that I broke any more of the commandments. I know that I did not break the ninth."

*Mr. Penrose.* "Read the ninth commandment to me, Rupert."

*Rupert.* "'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.' That I did not do."

*Mr. Penrose.* "This commandment forbids falsehood. A boy who, like John Strong, would drive his father's horses on Sunday, without permission, would be likely to tell a falsehood to screen himself from blame."

*Rupert.* "He *did* say that he meant to tell his father he took the horses directly home from the church."

*Mr. Penrose.* "Then I very much fear that your company was the temptation to John to take that ride, which ended in his telling a falsehood to his father. When we are, in any way, knowingly the cause of another person's committing sin, it is the same as if we had committed the sin ourselves. So, my dear Rupert, I fear you are not quite guiltless upon the ninth commandment. But go on with the tenth."

*Rupert.* "'Thou shalt not covet.' There! Now I know you

will bring me up with that too, uncle ; because I said I wished I had John's grays. I do think that I broke that. But just to think that in less than an hour I broke almost all the commandments !”

*Mr. Penrose.* “ You see by this that the breaking of one commandment leads to the breach of many. We rarely ever break one commandment alone. As St. James says, ‘ Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.’ James ii, 10.”

*Rupert.* “ Well, I do not believe any person ever kept all the commandments, or ever could keep them either.”

## CHAPTER XII.

## LOVE MAKES OBEDIENCE EASY.

May I in my God delight,  
Have him ever in my sight;  
Love to do his holy will.

LITTLE HYMN-BOOK.

“No mere man ever lived without having broken God’s commandments,” said Mr. Penrose. “Jesus Christ, who was both God and man, is the only person who ever lived in our world without breaking that law which was given upon Mount Sinai.”

“But must we always break God’s commandments, papa?” asked little Alfred.

“When we believe on the

Lord Jesus Christ, and love him, then he takes away our naughty feelings, and enables us to do his will. Do you remember that very cold day when I was taken ill, and your mamma had no one but you to send for the doctor? The snow lay deep upon the ground; but you did not mind that or the cold north wind either. You loved your father so well, that it was no hardship for you to run half a mile through the cold for him. But if you had not wanted me to get well, I know that you would have drawn up your little face, and said, ‘O, mamma! must I go?’ especially as you were very happy, playing with your blocks and your toy-

sled, when she asked you if you thought you could take such a long, cold walk for dear papa.

“Just so it becomes easy for us to keep God’s commandments when we learn to love him. When we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus we feel as the loving child does toward his dear father and mother. You know that a child who loves his parents cannot bear to do anything to displease them. He is always inquiring what he shall do for the dear father whom he loves, and who is so very good to him. Just so the Christian feels. He asks God, for his dear Son’s sake, to teach him what his will is, and to enable him to do

it; and God hears and answers his prayer. Thus Jesus said, 'If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.' John xiv, 23."

Mr. Penrose then told Rupert where he must go for pardon, even to the Lord Jesus Christ, "who ever liveth to make intercession for us." He did not usually talk to the children upon religious things for as long a time together as he had that evening: but Rupert was to leave them for school in a few days, and Mr. Penrose wanted to give him as much instruction as he could bear; hoping that he

might think of his words at some future time, although he did not care much for them now.

Rupert left Norwood at the appointed time; and we will now turn to our little Alfred, who continued to have pleasant sled-rides, fine skatings, and nice talks with papa.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## P R O M P T O B E D I E N C E .

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.—Eph. vi, 1.

I watch'd thee silently, and now  
Thou art before mine eye.  
It was a moment worthy years.

BERNARD BARTON.

“COME, Alfred, it is time to go to bed,” said Mrs. Penrose to her little son, one evening.

Alfred was busy making pictures on a slate, and did not want to go to bed yet. He begged that he might finish off his horse. His mamma said he *might* finish his horse, although his hour for going to bed *had* come.

Because he was allowed to sit

up a little later than usual on that evening, Alfred wanted to do so at another time. When his mamma said,

“Alfred, take the lamp, and go into the bed-room,” he would hesitate and linger, as if he only obeyed his mamma because he was obliged, and not because he loved to.

One morning Alfred’s mamma said,

“I am afraid my little boy has forgotten his old text, ‘Children, obey your parents.’”

“Why, mamma,” said Alfred, “I think I do always obey you.”

“But you do not obey me directly; and you do not always

seem to like to do what I tell you. When I call you to me, you do not run quickly. And lately, when I have told you to go to bed, you draw up your face, and behave as if you went because you must, and not because you loved to do what your mother desires. Now that is not the way that God would have little children behave. He tells them to honor their parents. Children should always obey willingly, and not stop to ask for a reason, when they are commanded to do anything."

Then Alfred's papa, who had been reading in the room, but who had heard what mamma had said to Alfred, said,

“ I will tell you a story, Alfred, which I read when I was a very little boy.”

“ O, papa !” said Alfred, “ did you use to read stories when you were a little boy ; and did you like to have stories told you as I do now, and did you have a good papa to tell them to you, as I have ? Or perhaps your mamma told them to you.”

“ You ask a great many questions in a breath, my little boy,” said his father ; “ but I will try to answer them. I did love to read stories when I was a little boy, and I did like to have them told to me ; but my papa was always too busy to tell me sto-

ries, and my mamma was dead ; so I had no one to tell me stories, as you have."

Alfred stood still a moment, as if he were thinking. Then he said,

" O, papa, it must be very sad not to have a mamma ! Did you never see your mother ? Were you a little baby when she died ?"

Then his papa told Alfred that he was not a little baby when his mother died ; but that he was only five years old.

" I only remember one thing about her," said he. " I went into her bed-room one morning, and said, ' Mamma, will you go

down stairs now?" And she answered me, 'In a few minutes, Arthur. Go and stand by the window until I am ready.' Then as I stood by the window I saw my mamma kneel down by the side of her bed, and put her hands over her face. When she was done I asked her what made her cry? She answered, 'I was not crying, my child. I was praying to God.' That is almost all I recollect of my dear mamma, Alfred."

"I think that was a pleasant remembrance, papa," said little Alfred. "Perhaps your mamma then prayed for you, and maybe that is the reason why

you are good now. But please tell me the story that you read when you were a little boy."

Then Alfred's papa told him the little story, which you will find in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE DISOBEDIENT CHICKEN.

The poor hen did cry,  
And make a loud din.  
And hard did she strive  
To teach them aright ;  
For to see them do wrong  
Always gave her a fright.

FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

“ THERE was once a hen that had five chickens. They were all very pretty. Four of them were white. One of them was of a reddish brown.

“ The hen and chickens belonged to a little boy, named James. One day James heard the hen and chickens make a great noise. He was planing some boards

with his little plane, to make a bird-house; but he dropped his plane, and ran out into the yard. The old hen was calling her little ones to come under her wings. She had seen a large, fierce-looking dog come into the yard, and she was frightened for her chickens. She said, 'Cluck! cluck! cluck!' very quickly; and the chickens seemed to know that she called them to her, for they all, except one, ran very quickly, and hid themselves under her wings. One little white chicken looked up at its mother, as if she said, 'I will come directly, mother; but not quite yet:' and then went on picking up seeds with her little bill.

“ The poor mother called louder. James ran to drive away the dog; but he sprang forward, caught the little white chicken in his mouth, and ran out of the yard.

“ Now the poor chicken was lost for not minding its mother immediately; and great harm may come to little children from the same cause.

“ If children are not obedient to their parents they will not do well here; but, what is worse, disobedience will be punished in another world. It is said of him who does not honor his father and his mother that ‘his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.’ ”

After this Alfred was very careful, for some time, to do everything that he was told, immediately. It was pleasant to see him jump the instant he was called, and make his little feet fly rapidly along to do what he was bid. He did not say any more, "Mamma, I am not sleepy;" "O, please, mamma, let me sit up a little longer! why must I go to bed so early?" when his mamma said, "Alfred, it is your bed-time;" but he would take the lamp in his hand, and say, "Good night" to all the family, and go to bed with a pleasant smile upon his face.

The day after his father had told him the story of the disobe-

dient chicken, Alfred said to his mother,

“When papa was telling me that story yesterday it made me think of the pretty words that Jesus said when he came nigh unto Jerusalem, and wept over it. Won’t you read them to me, mamma?”

Alfred’s mother read the words to him, from Matt. xxiii, 37:—

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”

## CHAPTER XV.

## ABOUT MANY GOOD THINGS.

A sinful creature I was born,  
And ever since have stray'd ;  
I must be wretched and forlorn  
Without thy mercy's aid.

But Christ can all my sins forgive,  
And wash away their stain ;  
Can fit my soul with him to live,  
And in his kingdom reign.

MY LITTLE HYMN BOOK.

WE closed our last chapter with a beautiful verse from the Bible ; and when she had read it, Alfred's mamma said,

“ How full of love was our dear Saviour when he lived upon the earth ! He pitied the poor wicked people who despised him, and who at length put him to

death. And now that he is in heaven, at the right hand of God the Father, he yet pities the poor sinner who will not come unto him and obtain eternal life.

“O, Alfred! I hope that you will not make Jesus sorry, as the Jews did! You must love him, my dear child. You must think of all his goodness. You must pray to him very often, and try to please him in all things. Then you will be his dear little boy. He will take care of you as long as you live; and, when you die, he will take you to heaven, to dwell with him for ever and ever.”

“O, mamma!” said little Alfred, “I do want to be God’s

dear child. I do not love wicked people who swear, and get drunk, and break the sabbath."

"No, I dare say not, Alfred. But those who swear, and get drunk, and break the sabbath, are not the only wicked people. There are some, who would not do any of these things for the world, who yet are not good in the sight of God. He sees their hearts, and he knows that they do not love him. They do not think of him. They love many things better than God."

*Alfred.* "But it is so wicked, mamma, to love anything better than God!"

*Mamma.* "Yet how many do this, Alfred! How few little

boys there are who think constantly of God, even when they are in church, or while they are saying their prayers."

Alfred, who sometimes boasted how good he was, although he had often been told what a wicked and deceitful heart he had by nature, and how necessary it was that it should be washed in the blood of Jesus, said,

"Mamma, I think of God when I go to church, and whenever I say my prayers."

*Mamma.* "I wonder then that you should have looked so long at those new boots, in church, last Sunday, my dear. I was quite sorry and ashamed to see you hold out your feet, and look

at them so many times. Then you would pull the straps, and turn your foot round and round, that you might see the boots all over: and I do not believe that you heard a word of the sermon all the time. O, my dear Alfred, you thought more of your boots than of God!"

Alfred hung his head, and said he was sorry that he had done so; and that he would pray to God to forgive him for Jesus' sake. He asked his mamma to pray that he might love God more, and try to do his will, not only on Sundays, but every day and all day long.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE OBEDIENT BOY.

I must not tease my father,  
For he is very kind ;  
And everything he says to me  
I must directly mind.

MY LITTLE HYMN-BOOK.

A VERY few days after Alfred's talk with his papa about obeying immediately, Mr. Penrose met a gentleman who told him about a little son of his, whose life was probably saved by his quickly obeying his father. The story was as follows :—

The little boy, and his father and mother, were sailing upon a canal. A canal is a very deep and wide ditch, full of water, on

which boats sail. Many bridges are built over these canals. Persons have been killed by not lying down flat upon the deck of the canal-boat in time to prevent their being struck by the bridges. But grown people generally look out for them in time to save themselves, when they stand upon the deck of the boat.

Little Edward had been taken from his parents by some of the passengers, and carried up to the deck. He was then about six years old. After awhile his father and mother also went up. As soon as they reached the deck they saw the boat was going very rapidly toward a bridge; and O how frightened they were to see

their dear little boy standing alone on that part of the boat which was nearest to it! There was no time to run and catch him in their arms. The father could only speak to him, and his mother stood trembling.

Little Edward's father called very loudly to him, "Edward! lie down!" and the dear little fellow was so accustomed to obey in a minute that he dropped down upon the deck as soon as his father spoke to him. In this way his life was saved. If Edward had stopped to say, "Why must I lie down, father?" he would probably have been killed. It is promised to those who keep their Father's commandments, that

they shall have "length of days, long life, and peace." Proverbs iii, 2.

This story delighted Alfred, and afterward, when he was bidden to do anything, his mamma had only to say, "Alfred, remember Edward," to make him run very quickly and do what he was told to do.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## PIERRE MERLIN.

He pray'd, and, trusting in God, he slept  
In his heaven-appointed nest.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.—Psa. xxxiv, 7.

“PAPA, what is the name of the book you are reading?” said an older brother of Alfred to his father, one day.

His father told him the name of the book, and Frank said,

“O, how dry it looks! I wonder you can bear to read such very dry books, father!”

“The book is very interesting to me, Frank,” said his father.

“I like to read travels, and sto-

ries of all kinds ; stories about the sea and the land," said Frank.

"God knew that children loved stories," said his papa ; "and he has filled his own book with the most wonderful and beautiful stories."

"Yes, and travels and voyages too, papa," said Alfred. "Was not that a fine voyage of Paul ; and a wonderful journey which the Israelites took through the wilderness ?"

"O yes !" said little Flora ; "with a bright pillar going on before them at night, and a cloudy pillar all day."

"And bread sent down from heaven for them to eat," said Alfred.

“And cool water gushing out of the rock,” continued little Flora. “And, O, how pretty the story of the Shunamite’s little boy is, who got sick, and said, ‘My head! my head!’ I am glad Elisha made him alive again.”



“And, O, Flora,” said Alfred, “all about Elijah is so pretty!”

Don't you remember how the ravens fed him in the wilderness? Was not that a wonderful story, father?"

"Yes, my son," said Alfred's papa, "it was very wonderful: and I read a story yesterday that was something like it, although it was not in the Bible."

"Dear father," said Alfred, "will you tell it to me?"

"Yes, if you will bring your chair beside me, and sit very still.

"There was once a good man named Pierre Merlin. He was a pious minister; and the Roman Catholics hated him, because he preached doctrines which the Bible teaches, but which they do not like.

“ At one time, the Roman Catholics, in France, determined to murder all who did not belong to their church. They *did* murder many hundred pious persons, on a night which was called St. Bartholomew’s Eve. They would have killed good Pierre Merlin, but he jumped out of a window, and thus got away from those wicked people. It was dark, and he ran on, on, on; expecting every minute to be caught. Then he came to a haystack. Quite out of breath, he hid himself in this friendly place, which seemed set there to be to him what the city of refuge was to the Israelites, when they ran for their life. He thanked God

for his mercy to him. He could not lie down in that narrow place, and he was very tired ; yet, nestled in the hay, he slept in peace, for the Lord sustained him.

“ The morning came, gray, still, and misty. The little birds began to twitter, and the poultry around awoke, and shook their wings, and smoothed their feathers, and sent out their long, loud cry of welcome to the opening day. Then golden colors painted the eastern sky ; and, at last, the bright, red sun rose to spread his gracious rays over the awakening earth.

“ Pierre Merlin gladly, yet sorrowfully, looked at the sun. Since it had last risen many of

God's dear saints had been cruelly murdered. Some of his own friends were among the number. This thought made him weep.

“Do you think, my dear children, that Merlin wished any evil to those people who had been so cruel to him, and to his friends? No, for he was a Christian. Like Jesus, he said, ‘Father, forgive them! They know not what they do.’

“I said that *gladly*, as well as sorrowfully, this good minister looked at the sun. Though he was sorry for the wickedness of his enemies, and for the death of his friends, he was yet glad that his life was saved. He thought

that he might yet preach the gospel of Christ.

“He knew that his enemies were all around, looking for him ; for he had heard his name mentioned by them with loud curses. He dared not venture from his hiding-place ; although, as the morning advanced, he became faint and hungry. He thought he should perish with hunger if he remained there many days. But he continued praying to God, and did not fail to put his trust in him.

“After he had prayed, he felt something moving near him. Merlin’s heart beat very quickly. What could it be ? Was it a hand thrust in among the hay, to

feel if he was there? He lay very still. Still the motion continued. Directly he heard a sound: it was the voice of a hen that said, 'Cack, cack, cack!' very joyfully, because she had just laid an egg.

"Then the hen went away; and Merlin put out his hand, and took the egg which she had left, and ate it for his breakfast. O, he did not want egg-glass or spoon, or even salt, to make that egg taste deliciously! He felt stronger for eating it. 'But what shall I do to-morrow?' said he to himself. Then came this text to Merlin's mind: 'Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into

barns ; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they ?' Matt. vi, 26.

“ So he determined to trust in God for the morrow ; in the gracious Father who feeds the little birds that cannot do anything toward making food grow for themselves.

“ God did not forget his child. He saw Merlin in the hay-stack just as plainly as he saw Elijah in the wilderness.

“ The second day came ; and the old hen came too, laid her egg in the hay-stack, and walked off. Merlin thus got his breakfast on the second day. It was not much, but it gave him some strength.

“The third day his good old friend again paid him a visit. O, how very anxiously he had watched for her that morning! How afraid he was that she would not come! Faint and hungry as he had become, it tasted even more deliciously than the two former ones.

“On the third day all was still around him. He made a little hole in the straw, and peeped out. He saw nobody. Night came on, and Merlin left his hiding-place, praying to God every minute, as he walked along.

“What is that he sees in the distance? It is one of the cruel soldiers, with his gun! But he must go on. He fears to turn

back. As he comes nearer he finds it is only a small tree, with a very long arm, which had frightened him.

“Onward he goes, stumbling in the darkness, and very weary. The morning comes. What is that before him? A river, gleaming, like molten silver, in the early light. And, O joyful sight! a vessel, bearing English colors, just setting sail. Merlin makes a signal. A boat is let down from the vessel. He is taken in it, and escapes safely to England to tell the story of his wonderful preservation.”

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE SILLY BIRD.

“The poor bird did not know,  
For nobody taught her,  
That her nice little nest  
Would be drown’d in the water.”

ALFRED began to read pretty well by the time he was five years old. He and his papa would read a chapter in the Bible together, verse by verse, once a day. Then, when his papa had time, he would talk a little to his son about what they had read.

The month of March had come, and brought with it many signs of spring. The blue-bird and the robin had been heard,

and wild-flowers bloomed in warm and sunny nooks. The willow showed its silvery balls, and the sun was high in the heavens.

One sunny day, when the snow had melted, and the roads were a little dried, Mr. Penrose took his little boy to walk in the woods. They found some beautiful green moss, and one bunch of arbutus. Alfred brought the flower to his mamma, and put the moss around her flower-pots. Then, when they had rested, he sat down to read his chapter with his father.

They read the seventh chapter of Matthew, which tells of the man whose house the floods

swept away, because it was built upon the sand.

“Who is meant by the foolish man, Alfred?” said his papa.

“Is it the wicked man, papa?” asked the little boy.

“Yes, it is the sinner, who does not love the Saviour. Jesus Christ is the only hope of the soul. I know I often tell you this; but I do it because I want you always to remember this great truth. Jesus here compares himself to a rock. When we learn to love the Saviour as we ought, then we are set upon this rock; and God will not let sorrow, or even death, remove us from that safe resting-place.

“Last summer I saw some-

thing which made me think of what we have just read.

“It had rained hard in the night, but cleared off early in the morning. The sun was very hot. About ten o’clock I saw quite a smoke arise from the flat, tin roof of the wing of the house. I looked, and found it covered with water. I wondered what it could mean. Upon examination, I found a bird’s nest, very neatly made of hair, and lined with feathers, placed directly over the hole which led into the spout. It filled it up entirely, and so prevented the water running into the spout.

“Poor foolish bird, to take so much pains to build its nest in

that insecure place! She had thought, I suppose, that she would keep house very snugly there; and there bring up her little ones, and give them their first lesson in flying from the house to the big willow-tree, which stands alongside of it.

“How frightened she must have been when she felt the waters overflowing her nest! How much she must have wished that she had put it in the right place! My dear boy, we must make a better provision for our heavenly home than this poor bird did for her nest; so that we may not be surprised and disappointed, like her, at last.”

## CHAPTER 'XIX.

JOY IN HEAVEN—THE LITTLE  
RUNAWAYS.

These pretty babes, with hand in hand,  
Went wandering up and down.

BABES IN THE WOOD.

ONE day, when Alfred was at church, the minister preached from the words, "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Luke xv, 10. It is a sweet text; and the minister preached a beautiful sermon upon it. Alfred's mamma showed him the words in the Bible; and he remembered them, and told them to his papa, who was ill that day, and could not go to church. Mr.

Penrose talked to Alfred about the words he had repeated to him, and the next day told him about a family which rejoiced over the lost ones who wandered from their home.

“ I had two little cousins who lived in New-York,” said Alfred’s papa. “ Harry was six years old, and little Ann five. They had two brothers, and one sister. They were never allowed to go into the street without some person with them. This they did not like ; so they often tried to open the front door, but the latch was too high and too strong for them.

“ One morning they went into the entry, before their papa and

mamma had come down stairs. While they were playing there the milkman rang at the door. The servant went to get a pitcher for the milk, and left the front door open. When Harry saw this he said,

“ ‘ Ann, let’s go down on the pavement, and take a little walk.’ ”

“ Ann said,

“ ‘ O, yes, Harry, do let us go!’ ”

“ So they walked out of the door, and down the steps to the pavement. Then they felt very proud. They were pleased to think how nicely they had run away. They had no cloak or shawl, although the day was cool, for it was the fall of the year.

Harry wore a little cap, and Ann a bonnet, which they caught from behind the door, as they went out.

“ They walked on through the streets, looking at all the pretty things that they saw in the shop-windows. After they had gone on some time, little Ann said,

“ ‘ Brother, I am hungry.’ ”

“ Harry said,

“ ‘ I am hungry too. We will go home, and get our breakfast.’ ”

“ But this was not easily done. They turned back ; but they did not take the right street to lead them home. Every step took them further off. So on they went, hand in hand, like the babes in the wood, until they

both grew still more hungry and faint. They sat down upon some steps to rest, and then got up, and wandered on.

“After awhile they found that they were near a river, and they saw a boat lying by the wharf.

“Harry said,

“‘Ann, I think that boat will take us to grandpapa’s. We always sail on the river when we go to see him. Let us step into it; and when we get to Newark grandmamma will give us some breakfast.’

“The tears were running fast down poor little Ann’s purple cheeks; for she was not only hungry, but tired and sorry.

“She said,

“ ‘ But won’t mamma be angry? O, I want to see mamma!’ ”

“ Then Harry was very naughty. He shook his little sister, and pulled her, to make her step upon the boat. She drew back, and Harry slipped, and fell between the wharf and the boat into the water. Ann was dreadfully frightened, and screamed. She thought her brother would be drowned.”



## CHAPTER XX.

## THE RESCUE—WELCOME HOME.

O joy ! I see our mother's face,  
Our own delightful home ;  
And never more from it shall we,  
Dear Annie, want to roam.

“ IN our last conversation we left Harry struggling in the water, and Ann standing on the wharf, screaming and crying very loud.

“ Just then, a young man, who wore a short blue jacket, a checked shirt, and a shining hat on the back of his head, came along ; and, seeing Ann's distress and poor Harry's situation, without saying one word, pulled off his jacket, and jumped into the wa-

ter after him. By this time a good many other people had gathered around. The sailor soon came up, with Harry in his arms; but the little boy was very pale and cold.

“Some people carried them into a small house that smelt of rum and tobacco smoke. They asked the children their names, and where they lived. When they had told them, they said they should be sent home after awhile, but that Harry must first go to bed; for he shivered, and was still very cold. They wanted him to drink some rum, but he refused. So they carried him up into a little, dark room, and laid him in a dirty bed, and put

some very heavy covering over him; and then went to get the children something to eat. Little Ann staid alongside of her brother's bed, crying all the time. Soon the woman of the house came up stairs, bringing them some bread and butter, and crackers and cheese. But, although they had been so hungry before, they did not feel like eating then. They were sick and unhappy. It seemed to them as if they were a great way off from their own home. The people in whose house they were, were not at all like their dear papa and mamma. They talked very loud, and laughed a great deal, and used words which the children

had never heard before. Ann said,

“‘ Brother, we have been very wicked in going away from home. I am afraid we never shall see our dear papa and mamma any more.’

“ Then they put their arms around each other’s neck, and cried.

“ Just then the woman of the house came in, and again asked them the name and the number of the street in which they lived. This Harry remembered, and told her.

“ She said,

“ ‘ Well, don’t take on so. I am busy fixing my Ned off to sea now; but to-night I will

take you to the place where your father and mother live.’

“The children thought it would be a very long time before night would come. Ann crept into the bed with Harry; and they nestled up to each other, and fell fast asleep.

“While they slept, a sound was heard without: ‘Lost children! Lost children!’ This was called out by a man who, at the same time, rang a bell which he held in his hand.

“When he got near the sailor, he was told that the children were safe in the house. He stopped ringing his bell, and went, in great haste, to tell the parents of the children that they

were found. Soon the father came, in a carriage, to take his little runaways home. The children awaked from their sleep in that miserable room to see their dear father's loving face bending over them, and to feel his warm kisses on their lips and cheeks.

“It was dark when they got home. As they were taken from the carriage, they saw each window in the brightly lighted parlor filled with faces on the look-out for them. And, O, what joy, when they found themselves again in their cheerful, happy home; in their precious mother's arms!

“It was time for Willy and Charlie to have their supper, and

for their little baby-sister to be put to bed; but nobody thought of them. Every one was thinking of the little ones who had been lost, but were now found. Parents and servants rejoiced together over the little stray lambs. They had been in danger, but were now safe. They had wandered from their father's house; and he had sent a messenger to find them. They had been naughty; but their father forgave them, and rejoiced over them."

Alfred knew enough of the Bible to apply this story. He saw in Harry and Ann's kind father a picture of our dear heavenly Parent, who sent his Son to call us back to him; and who

kindly receives and freely forgives us when we return. The rejoicing household, who forgot the other little ones for joy that Harry and Ann were safe, reminded him of the holy angels, who are so glad when a wicked person becomes good.



## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE LITTLE DOGS.

Frank had two pretty little dogs,  
With hair as soft as silk,  
A few brown spots upon their back,  
The rest as white as milk.

And many a happy hour they had,  
In dull or shining weather ;  
For, in the house, or in the fields,  
They always were together.

It was rare fun to see them race  
Through fields of bright-red clover,  
And jump across the running brooks,  
Flush and his brother Rover.

MRS. CHILD.

ALFRED, with all his brothers and sisters, had been taught to tell the exact truth. They had learned many texts of Scripture which speak of the sin and pun-

ishment of lying. These are a few of them:—

“The mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.” Psa. lxiii, 11.

“The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.” Prov. xii, 19.

“All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.” Rev. xxi, 8.

Alfred's brother Frank had two very beautiful young dogs. They had been given him by a friend, and were of a scarce and valuable breed. One of the dogs he had named Flush, and the other Rover. They had brown, silken ears, and brown spots on their

backs and legs. They had just been taken from their mother when Frank brought them home in his arms. They mourned a little; and Alfred and Flora felt sorry for them. They thought that they cried for their mother; and I suppose they did.

Frank fed them with some warm milk. Then he let Alfred and Flora stroke them. After they had been fed they lay down very quietly, and went to sleep. It was time for Frank to go to school: so he said to Alfred and Flora,

“You must not touch my little dogs while I am at school.”

Little Flora said,

“No, brother, I will not.”

But Alfred said,

“May I not put them in my apron, very softly? I will not hurt them; for I love them.”

His brother said,

“When I am at home I will let you play with the little dogs; but you must promise me not to touch my dogs while I am at school. They are very tender; and if you were not to lift them in just the right way, you would hurt, and perhaps kill them.”

Alfred then said,

“Frank, I will not touch the pretty little things when you are away; but you will let me pat them when you are at home, won’t you?”

“Yes; you may play with

them, and pat them, when I am here; and then you may feed them sometimes, too; but you will certainly remember your promise when I am away."

Some days after this, when Frank was at school, Alfred's mamma heard him say,

"O, pretty little fellows! nice little fellows! I love you very much, little Flush and little Rover!"

Alfred's mamma stepped into the hall to see what her little boy was doing. He was standing by the steps of the kitchen door; and the dogs were trying to climb into the house. But when they had put their paws upon the step they would fall backward; for

they were too small to climb up. Alfred would stretch out his hand to help the little dogs; and then he would draw it back again when he remembered his promise to his brother.

The little colored boy was rubbing his knives in the kitchen, and he said to Alfred,

“The dogs want to get up the steps. My hands are all brick-dust. Take hold, and help them up.”

But Alfred said,

“O, I must not touch them, John; for I promised I would not. I wish I *could* lift the little things up!”

It made Alfred's mamma glad to find how well her dear boy

kept his word. She lifted the dogs into the kitchen; and they seemed happy and well satisfied, for they laid down close together, behind the door, and went fast asleep.



## CHAPTER XXII.

## FORBIDDEN FRUIT.

And some of the fruit-trees that grew in the garden shot their branches over the wall ; and they that found them did gather them up, and eat of them to their hurt. So Christiana's boys (as boys are apt to do) being pleased with the trees, and with the fruit that did hang thereon, did pluck them, and began to eat. Their mother did also chide them for so doing.

## THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

Soon after this Mrs. Penrose went to New-York, and took Alfred and Flora with her. There they saw many beautiful things. As they rode up from the wharf, they were continually calling out, " O, mamma, look at that window !" or, " O, mamma, see that picture !" and, " O, what is that

high building?" and, "Who is that queer-looking person?"

Their mamma shook her head, and said,

"Children, try to be quiet. Look as much as you like, but do not ask me any questions now."

The carriage rattled over the pavement, and there were so many other noises around, that she could not hear their questions.

When they stopped at the house of the friend with whom they were to stay, they saw much that was very beautiful. There were pictures and vases, and many things that they had never seen or thought of in their little

simple country home. But Alfred thought that nothing in the house was as pretty as what he saw from the back windows. It was a garden, filled with flowers. He was delighted when he was told that he might spend as much time there as he liked. Alfred was a real little country boy, and he loved flowers dearly. In this garden were purple and white petunias, and roses of many shades, and of different colors. Sweet mignonette, too, grew there; and there was the delicate cypress-vine, with its feathery stalk, and its little bright flower. There were grape-vines too, which climbed a trellice that leaned against the high brick wall. On

the vines hung grapes; but they were still quite green and hard.

Alfred's mamma told him that he might walk in this garden; but that he must never pick any of the flowers, or the grapes. She thought that she might trust the little boy, who kept his word so well about the dogs.

Some days after this, when Flora was taking her nap, Alfred's mamma wanted him for something; and, from the garden door, called him to come to her. While she waited, she saw him coming toward her, with his little mouth puckered up, as if he had something in it. She called,

“Come here, Alfred.”

And Alfred came up the steps very slowly.

“What have you got in your mouth, my dear?” said Alfred’s mamma.

Not one word did Alfred answer; but he looked down, and turned very red. His mother knew, from his looks, that he had been doing something that was not right. He did not have that bright, happy face which he usually wore.

Alfred’s mother said to him,

“My son, open your mouth.”

When Alfred opened his mouth, O, how sorry I am to tell it of him! he showed a large green grape, tucked away in the corner of his mouth, which he

put into his hand as quickly as possible. His mamma took the grape out of Alfred's hand, and led him up stairs into her bedroom.

She said to him,

“ Alfred, how many of those grapes have you eaten ?”

“ Just one besides this, mamma,” said he, crying very much.

“ Why did you eat them, Alfred ?” said his mother. “ Did not I tell you that you must not do so ?”

“ Yes, mamma ; but they looked so very good.”

“ My dear little boy, that was the reason that Eve ate the apple which made us all sinners. She thought it looked good. It ‘ was

pleasant to the sight.' Did you not tell me, the other day, that you thought Eve was very naughty to eat the apple; and that you would not have done as she did? But you see you have done just like her. She disobeyed God by eating the apple, and you have disobeyed him by eating that green grape."

*Alfred.* "Mamma, God did not tell me that I must not eat the grape."

*Mamma.* "Yes, Alfred, he told you so through me; for it is for me to tell you what the will of God is: and you did not follow God's commandment to 'obey your parents' when you ate that

green grape. I did not see you eat it, but God did; and God does not love little boys, you know very well, who disobey their parents."

Alfred continued to cry, and said,

"O, I am so sorry, mamma!"

His mamma told him to go into his room, and stay there by himself, that he might think over what a naughty boy he had been.

Alfred went; and when his mamma followed him, some time afterward, he came to her, and said,

"Mamma, I was very wicked, I know. But I have prayed to God to forgive me, because Je-

sus Christ died. Don't you think he will, mamma?"

His mother said,

"Yes, my dear, I have no doubt that he will forgive you, if you are sorry for your sin, and are determined never again to do such a naughty thing. God has forgiven us all a great many sins; and he is still gracious and merciful. It is written, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' Isa. lv, 7."

From that time, I am glad to be able to say, little Alfred al-

ways told the truth ; and would never stop to look at anything that he had been told not to touch ; but hasten from it, that he might not be tempted to do as he had done about the grapes.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

## HAPPY CHILDREN.

Now I saw in my dream, that by this time the pilgrims entering into the country of Beulah, whose air was very sweet and pleasant, the way lying directly through it, they solaced themselves there for a season. Yea, here they heard continually the singing of birds, and saw every day the flowers appear in the earth, and heard the voice of the turtle in the land. In this country the sun shineth night and day. . . . Here they were within sight of the city they were going to : also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof : for in this land the shining ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven.—THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

ALFRED and Flora, soon after this, went with their mamma to a very delightful place. You must read the lines from the Pilgrim's Progress which I have put over the chapter ; for the land of

Beulah, which they speak of, was very much like the spot they visited. The kind friends with whom they staid loved God; and there were bright flowers, and pleasant fruits, and blue hills, and a wide, clear river, and a dear little boy for Alfred to play with. Alfred was very happy, running through the garden and orchard, and swinging in the nice swing, and going to school with little Walter. They went to school to a lady who loved them, and taught them many good things.

My dear little readers, I wish you all to see the pretty school-house to which they went every morning and afternoon. So get

your caps, for the sun is hot, and stand by me on this large piazza, from which we have so fine a view of the river.

It is nine o'clock, and Alfred and Walter come running out of the house. They turn to the right upon the gravel walk which leads to the river. They take the longest way, because the walk is so pleasant.

How the river sparkles in the sunshine this clear morning! O, how many boats we see! One, two, three, four. The boys get tired of counting them, there are so many.

Now a steam-boat, with many people on its deck, rushes swiftly past. Alfred and Walter stand



by the swing on the Catalpa-tree, to look at the steam-boat. Then they must sit down, just one half minute, on that pretty covered bench, standing between two trees. But they will not sit long. They must not keep Miss Lee waiting; and she calls them from the school-house door. Round the lawn they fly, past that large elm, and the plum-tree, bent down with green gages. They have come to the school-house, which well deserves a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## THE SCHOOL-HOUSE.

Come, dear ones, to your lessons,  
You have so much to say,  
Your spelling and your reading,  
Before you go to play.

Ah! I know you will be scholars;  
You've said all rightly o'er:  
Good children; and to-morrow  
You are to learn some more.

Come now into the garden,  
To the fruit and flowers away;  
So well you've said your lessons,  
That you deserve to play.—L. E. L.

O, WHAT a pleasant place that school-house was! How happily did Alfred, and Walter, and little Sidney, pass their time there; taught so well and so kindly by good Miss Lee!

There it stands, down in a little dingle, with its deep roof and carved border, and its green latticed windows. It is shaded by a large elm,

“which, with looks of love,  
Spreads its whispering leaves above,  
Through long summer hours.”

A cherry-tree stands by the door. White and blue pigeons sit upon the roof, and coo. The little boys smell the sweet flowers in the garden, as they study their books. All kinds of sweet flowers grow in that charming garden, alongside of the school-house. There are whole beds of the heliotrope, the ever-sweet heliotrope, with its gray, crimped leaves, and

its yellow heart. Lovely mignonette, too, is hiding itself everywhere. Although you do not see this modest flower, whose pretty French name means little darling, yet you smell its sweetness continually. There are white, and pink, and deep red roses, in full bloom; and verbenas, pink, crimson, blue, white, and purple; and the snow-white day-lily, which smells like fresh, ripe grapes. And near the little school-house is the prettiest bower, made entirely of the cypress-vine. It looks as fine and delicate as lace-work, yet its stalks are so thickly woven that it will not blow down.

In front of the school-house is a green lawn. When the boys stood upon it they saw the river, and the hills on the other side, and the noble Catskill Mountains, as blue as the sky.

In this beautiful little place the boys spent some hours every day. When their lessons were over they played in the garden, or swung, or sometimes rode upon the donkey.

One day, as Alfred sat by the door, he saw something run past him, very swiftly. He called out,

“O, Miss Lee, I see something!”

“What do you see, Alfred?” said Miss Lee.

“A pretty little red thing, with a long, bushy tail,” said he.

“I suppose it is a squirrel,” said Miss Lee.

“O yes, ma’am,” said Alfred, “it is a squirrel. I have seen squirrels in the woods; but I did not know that they ever lived in a garden.”

As he said this, a little ground-squirrel, with two young ones, came out of a hole under the green well-curb, by the school-house door. At first they seemed a little afraid; but the boys were still, and the squirrels became bolder. After that they would pay Alfred and Walter a daily visit.

They were wise little squirrels to come and live with such good people. They need not fear mischievous boys, or cruel guns, in that sweet, quiet place.



## CHAPTER XXV.

## SUGAR-PLUMS.

I do not want to study,  
It is so warm to-day ;  
So I'll run into the meadow,  
And roll among the hay.

CHARLOTTE FOX.

At length the time came when Alfred's pleasant visit must end. When he was going away, Walter gave Flora a very beautiful box, as a keepsake. The box was filled with sugar-plums.

He also gave one to Alfred, on which was a picture of a boy flying a kite.

When they were in the steam-boat, Alfred brought the box to his mother, and said,

“Mamma, how many of these sugar-plums may I eat to-day?”

His mother said,

“You had better give me the box to keep for you, my dear; and when you say your lessons well, I will give you a few sugar-plums at a time, as a reward.”

Alfred loved sugar-plums very much; and he said he would rather keep the box himself, and eat them just when he liked.

His mother told him that if he did he would eat them all up, as the boy in the story-book eat his cake, and very likely get as sick as he; therefore he had better give them to her to deal out to

him. So Alfred consented that his mamma should do this.

There were some very hot days after Alfred's return to Norwood. On one of these he felt very lazy, and said,

"O, mamma, my lesson is so hard that I cannot get it to-day"

Then, instead of studying it, he would play with his shoe-string, or pocket-handkerchief.

His mamma said, many times, "Alfred, it is getting quite late. Are you not ready to say your lesson yet?"

But Alfred did not get ready until twelve o'clock; and even then did not know his first lesson quite well; and the second one had to be put off until the

afternoon. In the afternoon it was hotter than it had been in the morning. Alfred held his book in his hand, and did everything but study. He would lie down upon the floor, and look out of the window, although nothing was to be seen there but the still trees, and the drooping flowers, and the parched grass, and the hot, blinding sun, which seemed to have frightened the katydids, and the bees, and the birds, into entire stillness.

At night, when he went to bed, he called to his mamma, who was in the next room,

“O, my sugar-plums, mamma! I have not had my sugar-plums!”

“No, I know you have not, my dear. But why should you have them?”

“O, because I love them! And you know, mamma, I was to have a few every day.”

“Yes, if you deserved them. You know they were to be a kind of reward; but you certainly cannot feel that you ought to have any to-night.”

Alfred confessed that he had not deserved them, and said he would try to do better the next day; and so, after saying the little verse which he used to repeat after he had said his prayers, he went to sleep.

This is the verse which Alfred said:—

“ At night I lay my little head  
To rest upon my nice soft bed ;  
Lord, let thy holy angels keep  
Thy watch around me while I sleep.”

After this Alfred got his lessons well, even without sugar-plums. He began to think, too, that he was too large to eat them, and gave them all away ; although he still kept the box with the picture of the boy and the kite on it. But it became quite a saying among the children, when any one wanted something that they had not earned, “ O, you must not have the sugar-plums, when you have not got your lesson.”

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE ROBINS.

O, they are sweet, pretty things !  
Flying round with rapid wings.

FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

ONE sweet September morning Alfred's papa rose early. Silvery mists rested upon the mountains ; but when the sun arose they parted, and curled upward. The industrious little spider, who works when we sleep, had hung fine silken threads over the dewy blades of grass. The sky was bright, and the air very still.

Mr. Penrose was going to take a ride into the country ; and Alfred was to go with his papa. As they stood by a window, waiting

for the carriage, they heard a strange whirring sound. They looked up into a wild cherry-tree, that stood at a short distance from the window, and saw so many robins that they could not count them. The little thieves were stealing all the cherries. O, how fast they picked and ate! The robins did not belong there. Other birds built their nests in that tree; but the robins always built in the mossy and crooked apple-trees, on the other side of the fence.

At first Alfred was pleased to see the robins enjoy the cherries; but afterward he thought they ate so many that none would be left for the little birds who made

their home in the shrubbery, and sung for them all day long.

I think Alfred never had a pleasanter ride than on that day with his papa. The road was hilly; and a great part of it lay through rich, dark woods. The smell of the woods was delightful; and beautiful mosses were spread along the track of their carriage. Now and then, little brooks ran swiftly along, with a gurgling sound; and gray squirrels leaped among the branches of the trees.

Mr. Penrose, who always tried to say something that would do his children good, when he was with them, said to Alfred,

“My son, you may say your

text to me this morning, as you did not say it at the breakfast-table."

So Alfred repeated the text to his father, which he had learned the night before. It was this:—

"Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." Matthew x, 42.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE PROPHET—HIS DELIVERER.

Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.—Psa. xli, 1, 2.

WHEN Alfred had finished, his father said, "That text tells us that God knows when we are kind to his children, and will reward us for it at the judgment day."

"But, father," said Alfred, "you told me once that we did not deserve reward for any good thing which we ever did."

"We do not deserve any reward," said Mr. Penrose. "The

wish in us to do anything right comes from God. Yet, after he has given us this disposition, he rewards us for the exercise of it; so, as the apostle Paul tells us, 'It is all of grace.' "

"Does God never pay us in this world for doing right?" said Alfred.

"Sometimes he *does* pay us, even in this world, for being good to his people. I will tell you, Alfred, how he once rewarded a man because he was kind to one of his ministers.

"Many years, a great many years ago, some wicked men took one of God's good ministers, and put him in a dungeon. A dungeon is a dark prison. The

dungeon in which this good minister, or prophet, was put was a doleful place under ground. The bottom of it was full of soft, filthy mud.

“Wicked people put him in this sad place, because he feared the Lord, and would say what he bade him, instead of what the enemies of the Lord wished. They wanted him to say pleasant, flattering things; but God did not tell him these.

“No doubt Jeremiah, for that was the prophet’s name, prayed to God from that dark dungeon. Daniel cried to him from the lions’ den, and Jonah prayed to him when the darkness wrapped him about. Man could not hear

Jonah's voice from the midst of the seas; but God heard both Daniel and Jonah. And he also heard the voice of his faithful Jeremiah from the deep, damp dungeon.

“God put it in the heart of a man, who lived in the king's house, to remember Jeremiah, and to pity him. This good man went to the king, and said,

“‘Those are wicked people who have cast Jeremiah into the dungeon. He will die for hunger.’

“The king told this man to take some persons to help him, and to draw Jeremiah out of the dungeon.

“ Then this kind man let some ropes into the dungeon, and drew Jeremiah out of it. He made him put some old linen, which he threw down to him, under his arms, lest the ropes should hurt him. So he was very tender toward him.

“ Now because the man had done this thing to one of God’s faithful ones, God remembered him when, some time after, fierce soldiers came against the city, and killed almost all the people. He was not hurt because of his kindness to the prophet.

“ So you see, Alfred, *he* was paid for it in this world.

“ You will find this story in the twenty-eighth and twenty-

ninth chapters of the book of Jeremiah. When you get home you must read it for yourself."



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## LITTLE WILLIAM.

Forget her not ! though now her name  
Be but a mournful sound.—HEMANS.

JUST as Alfred's papa had finished saying these words they reached the gate of the house where they were to breakfast. It belonged to a friend of Mr. Penrose, who wished to see him on some business ; and Mr. Penrose had chosen the early part of the day for the visit, because he was generally much engaged at other times.

Alfred saw that the gentleman looked very serious ; and that no lady sat down to the breakfast-

table with them. There were two children; a little boy about the age of Alfred, and a sister who was older. The little boy's name was William. He looked pale and sad; and Alfred could not help feeling sorry for him.

After they had finished eating breakfast, William's papa told him that he might take Alfred out into the garden, to walk. Rosa also went with them, and seemed very cheerful and kind; and showed Alfred her rabbits, and her birds and flowers. She said,

“William used to love these, and helped me to take care of them once; but he does not care anything about them now.”

When Rosa said this, Alfred saw the tears come into William's eyes, and he wished Rosa had not spoken so.

William said,

"I did love them when mamma was here, Rosa; but now everything makes me feel sorry."

Then Rosa turned red, and went into the house; and William cried very much, as Alfred stood by him. Alfred said,

"Has your mamma gone away from you?"

"Yes," said little William, "my mamma died two weeks ago. I know she has gone to heaven; but I miss her very much. Nobody loves me as she did."

Alfred felt ready to cry too. He said,

“But you know if you are a good boy you will go to heaven too, William, and see your dear mamma in that beautiful place.”

“Yes, I know it,” said William. “She told me so before she died. She said if I was a good boy it would not be long before I should come to her; and that then she would not go away from me any more.”

Alfred was an affectionate child. His heart was full of sorrow for little William. All the way home he could talk of nothing else: but he was glad when his papa told him that William's father had promised

to let his little boy come over, on the next week, and spend several days with them.

William came; and soon felt quite at home. Mrs. Penrose liked to hear him talk of his good mother; and all the family loved him, for he was a good-tempered and interesting little fellow.

The evening after Alfred's first visit to William, he told his sister Jane about him. The next morning she brought him a folded paper, and, as she opened it, said,

“ Alfred, I thought so much of your little friend last night that I wrote some verses about him, which I will read to you.”

The verses were as follows;  
and were headed,

THE MOTHERLESS BOY.

It is the hour when I was wont,  
At my lost mother's knee,  
To say my little evening prayer,  
Before she read to me.  
But many weary months have pass'd,  
And many tears I've shed,  
Since I have felt her gentle hand  
Laid kindly on my head.

The hour I loved so dearly once,  
Now only sorrow brings ;  
No mother reads the word of life,  
Or song of Zion sings.  
A stranger comes, with careless voice  
And bids for bed prepare ;  
And often hardly gives me time  
To say a hurried prayer.

Although this room is just the same,  
It wears a mournful look ;  
Yet here's her bed, and here's the stand  
Which bears the holy book,  
That tells me of another land,  
In which she dwelleth now :

O, often o'er that book she bent,  
With pale and earnest brow !

In other days this little room  
A temple seem'd to me ;  
She taught me here to worship God  
In truth and purity.  
The fields beneath the window smile,  
And wear their summer hue ;  
The flowers she nursed look gay and bright,  
As when they met her view.

Yet, O, to me no thought of joy  
This happy season bears ;  
All dimm'd are these delightful scenes  
With thick and blinding tears.  
I cannot laugh as once I could,  
Nor hide the deep distress  
That breaks my heart, when I reflect  
That I am motherless.

And, sister, when I see you stand,  
With such an anxious air,  
Before the glass, your sash to fix,  
And smooth your braided hair ;  
I think of one so far above  
The petty pride of dress ;  
Who only shone in plain attire  
And simple loveliness.

She's gone ! but let her image sweet  
Be in our memory set ;  
And her example, pure and bright,  
Ah, let us not forget !  
We see her not ; but I believe  
Her mild and pitying-eye  
From heaven with anxious love looks down,  
Our actions to espy.



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